A PASTORS LOVE

Expressed to a

Loving People

In a Farwel

SERMON

PREACHED

At *Stephens Walbrook*, *London*.
August 17. 1662.

By Mr. *THO. WATSON*.

Acts 20. 38. *Sorrowing most of all for the words that he spake, that they should see his face no more.*

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PASTORS LOVE

Expelled by [illegible]

Loving People

SERMON

To the Reader.

Christian Reader,

HEre is presented to thy view, the last Sermon of Mr. Thomas Watson that he Preached to his loving and beloved people of Stephens Walbrook: the Reverend Author having no knowledge of its publication, I hope will be sufficient Apologie for the Disparity that is in it from his other Works, it being not published by the same pen, nor adorned with Marginal Quotations suitable to his other Sermons, thou canst not but know there is great difference between preparing Sermons for the Pulpit, and for the Press, the wisest Master Builder sees it sometime expedient to beat often upon one and the same truth, that they may nayl them not

onely to the ears, but the hearts of their Auditors; and therefore wonder not if thou meeteſt with any thing that may look like a Tautology, ſince I would rather be guilty of that then to take my own judgment for leaving out any thing delivered, I ſhould be ſorry, if the publication of this Sermon, which was intended for the ſatisfaction of all, ſhould prove to the diſſatisfaction of any, however I hope thou wilt be ſo candid to lay any fault in Printing or the like at the publiſhers door, not at the Preachers. I have but one requeſt more, and that is, that the Reader would propound as honeſt ends to himſelf, in reading it, as I did in tranſcribing of it, in ſo doing I ſhall be ſatisfied, and he will be edified,

Thy Friend and Servant.

R. M.

2 Cor. 7. Chap. part of the 1. verse.

Having therefore these promises, dearly Beloved, let us cleanse our selves.

IT is the Title I intend by the help of God to insist upon, this sweet Parenthasis in the Text (*my dearly Beloved*) wherein you have the Apostle breathing out his affections to his people; he speaks now as a Pastor, and to them as his spiritual Children, *my dearly beloved*. First, here is the Title, *my Beloved*; secondly, the Exhortation to holiness, *let us cleanse our selves*; thirdly, the means how we should be cleansed and sanctified, *having these promises*; It is the first I intend: the Title the Apostle gives to the *Corinthians*, his people, his Children, his dear beloved.

Doct. *That the affections of a right Gospel Minister to his people, are very strong and ardent.*

There are two things in every Minister of Christ that are much exercised; his Head, and his Heart; his Head with labour, and his heart with love.

1. His head with labour, the work of a Minister if done aright, is a work fitter for Angels then for Men. It is our work to open the Oracles of God, even these sacred and profound things,

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that the Angels ſearch into. If God did not help us, we might ſoon ſink under the weight of ſuch a burden.

2. As a Miniſters Head is exerciſed with labour, ſo his Heart with love, and its hard to ſay which of theſe two exceed, ſo it is in the Text, *dearly Beloved.*

In theſe words we have St. *Paul* laying ſiege to theſe *Corinthians*, and labouring to make a happy Victory, to conquer them with kindneſs.

St. *Pauls* heart was a ſpring of love, his lips were the pipes, the *Corinthians* were the Ciſtern in the which this ſpring did run. This holy Apoſtle was a mirrour or pattern of love; to the ſinning *Corinthians*, *Pauls* Tears did drop; to the praying *Corinthians*, his love did burn; holy *Paul* he was a *Ceraphim*, his heart did burn in flaming affections to his people, how many appelations do we find ſcattered in his Epiſtles, that are witneſs of his love, he tells his people to whom he ſometimes wrote, ſometimes preached, 2 *Cor.* 12. 14. *I ſeek not yours, but you*; he looked more after their ſouls, then after their ſilver; as a tender Nurſe cherriſheth her Child with her breſt, ſo did *Paul* cheriſh his people with the breaſt Milk of the word, 1 *Theſ.* 2. 7. we were willing to impart to you our own ſouls, becauſe you were dear to us, this man of God did not onely Preach his Sermons to his people, but would part with his own ſoul to them; ſuch was *Pauls* affection to his people, that without a complement he loved them more then his life; *Phil.* 2. 17. *If I be offered upon the ſacrifice and ſervice of your faith, I*

joy

joy and rejoyce with you all, as if he had ſaid, if it be ſo that my blood be poured out as a ſacrifice, and my death any way ſerviceable to you, if it may help forward the ſtrength and comfort of your faith, I am willing to dye; I rejoyce to do it. So full of affection and bowels was this Apoſtle, that he could not chuſe but love his people, although the more he loved them, the leſs he ſhould be beloved, 2 *Cor.* 12. 15. O how did *Paul* ſweeten all his Sermons with love; If he reproved ſin he was angry in love, he dipt the Pill in Sugar, *Gal.* 4. 9, 10. *how turn you again to the weak and beggerly Elements —— You obſerve Days and Monets and times, I am afraid of you*; and ſee here how he chides their ſins, and at the ſame time courts their ſouls; no ſooner doth he lance the wound, but preſently he pours in Wine and Oyl into the wound, ſo well did *Paul* love his people, that he would not juſtly give any offence to the weakeſt beleiver, 1 *Cor.* 8. 13. *If meat make my Brother to offend, I will never eat meat while the World ſtandeth*, St. *Paul* was like ſome tender Mother, who forbeareth to eat thoſe meats ſhe might, for fear of hurting the Child ſhe giveth ſuck to; thus you ſee he was a ſpiritual Father made up of love.

And ſurely Beloved, this affection in ſome degree is in every true Miniſter of Chriſt (they are full of ſympathy and bowels, over whom the Holy Ghoſt hath made them overſeers.)

There are reaſons (which I will but glance at) firſt, why it will be thus, and ſecondly, why it ſhould be thus. Firſt, It will be thus for two reaſons.

First, From that principle within, which teacheth love, grace doth not fire the heart with paſſion, but with compaſſion; grace in the heart of a Miniſter files off that ruggedneſs that is upon his ſpirit, and makes him lovely and curtious: *Paul* he once breathed out perſecution, but when grace came, this Bramble was turned into a ſpiritual Vine, twiſting himſelf about the ſouls of his people with loving embraces.

Secondly, From that ſpiritual relation that is between him and his people, he is a ſpiritual Father, and ſhall we think him to be without bowels, 1 *Cor.* 10. 15. *Though you have ten thouſand inſtructers, yet have you not many Fathers, for I have begotten you through the Goſpel*; ſome he begat to Chriſt, others he built up in Chriſt; doth not a Father provide carefully for his child, can a Father ſee the bread taken from his child, and will not his heart be affected. Is it not a grief to a parent to ſee his child put to ſuck to a dry Nurſe?

Secondly, There ſhould be this ardent love in every Miniſter for this reaſon; Becauſe this is the moſt likelyeſt way to do moſt good, knotty and ſtubborn hearts will ſooneſt be wrote on by kindneſs; fire doth melt the hardeſt mettle, and the fire of love by Gods bleſſing, is able to melt the obdurate ſinner; a *Barnabas* or ſon of conſolation, who comes in a ſpirit of meekneſs is fitteſt to do a piece of Goſpel Chyrurgery, to reſtore and put ſuch a one in joynt again, that is overtaken with a fault, *Gal.* 6. 1. ſo much for the Doctrinal part.

Appli-

Application in ſeveral Inferences.

First, See here the right character of a Goſpel Miniſter, he is full of love, he exhorts, he comforts, he reproves and all in love; he is never angry with his people but becauſe they will not be ſaved, O how loth is a Miniſter of Chriſt to ſee precious ſouls (like ſo many jewels) caſt over-board into the dead Sea of Hell? A conſciencious Miniſter would account it an unhappy day if he ſhould gain the world and loſe the ſouls of his people: He ſaith as the King of *Sodom* to *Abraham*, *Gen.* 14.21. *Give me the perſons and take you the goods.*

Secondly, How ſad then is it to have ſuch put upon people as have no love to ſouls? The work of a Miniſter is *a labour of love*. O how ſad is it to have ſuch in the Miniſtry who can neither labour nor love? they look more at Tythes then at ſouls. It muſt needs be ſad with any people in any part of the world who have ſuch Miniſters ſet over them, who do either poyſon them with error, or deſtroy them by wicked example. How can the Devil reprove ſin? How can that Miniſter cry out againſt Drunkenneſs in his pulpit, who will himſelf be drunk? *Rom.* 2.22. We read that the ſnuffers of the Tabernacle were to be made of pure gold, *Exod.* 37.23. Thoſe that by their calling are to reprove and ſnuff off the ſins of others ſhould be of pure gold, that is holy and ſpiritual. In the Law God did appoint that the lips of the Leper ſhould be covered, he ſhould not be permitted to ſpeak the Oracles of God, who though he be by office an Angel, yet by life a Leper.

Thirdly, See here the happy condition of that Miniſter

niſter who is ſetled among ſuch a people as gives him abundant cauſe to love them, happy is he that can ſay to his people, in the words of the Apoſtle, *My dearly beloved.*

And here let me ſpeak by way of encouragement to you of this pariſh. I find St. *Paul* commending the good he ſaw in his people, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 3. *We are bound to thank God always for you brethren, becauſe your faith grows exceedingly.* In imitation of this Apoſtle let me at this time ſpeak a commendatory word to you; I have exerciſed my Miniſtry among you now almoſt this ſixteen years, and I rejoyce and bleſs God, that I cannot ſay, *the more I have loved you the leſs I am beloved*; I have received many ſignal demonſtrations of love from you: though other Pariſhes exceeded you for number of houſes, yet I think not for ſtrength of affection. I have with much comfort obſerved your reverend attention to the Word preached; you have rejoyced in this light not for a ſeaſon, but to this day. I have obſerved your zeal againſt error, and as much as could be expected in critical times, your unity and amity; this is your honour, and if for the future there ſhould be an interruption made of my Miniſtry among you, though I ſhould not be permitted to preach to you, yet I ſhall not ceaſe to love you, and to pray for you.

But why ſhould there be an interruption made, where is the crime? Some indeed ſay we are diſloyal, we are ſeditious. Beloved, what my actions and ſufferings for his Majeſty hath been is not unknown to a few of you; but however we muſt go to heaven through good report and bad report; tis well if we can get to glory though we paſs through the pikes. I ſhall endea-

deavour that I may ſtill improve the ſincerity of my love. I will not promiſe that I ſhall ſtill preach among you, nor will I ſay that I ſhall not; I deſire to be guided by the guidance of Gods Word and his providence, my heart is towards you; you know that expreſſion, then we ſhall be laid down ſhortly as if we were natural'y dead; and if it muſt be ſo, let me leave ſome Legacies before I go hence. I cann t but give ſome counſel to your ſouls, and I hope there is no hurt in this.

There are Twenty *Directions* I would leave with you, and I deſire you would take notice of them.

Direction 1. Keep your conſtant hours every day with God; the godly man is a man ſet apart, *Pſa.* 4. 3. not onely becauſe God hath ſet him apart by election, but becauſe he ſets himſelf apart by devotion: Give God his hours every day; viſit God in the morning before you make any other viſit: wind up your hearts to heaven in the morning and they will go the better all day after. O turn your Cloſets into Temples, read the Scriptures, the two Teſtaments of the two lips by which God hath ſpoken to us, *theſe will make us wiſe to ſalvation*: The Scripture is both a glaſs to ſhew your ſpots, and a laver to waſh them away; beſiege Heaven every day with prayer, thus perfume your houſes, and keep a conſtant intercourſe with heaven.

Direct. 2. Get good Books into your houſe; when you have not the ſpring near you, you will get water into your Ciſterns; when you have not that wholſom preaching that you were wont to have, good books are the Ciſterns to hold the water of life to refreſh you. When *Davids* natural heat was taken away they applied warm cloaths to him, 1 *King.* 1. when you find

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a chilness upon your soul, and that your former heat begins to abate, ply your selves with warm cloaths, get these good Books that may furnish you with such truth as may warm and affect your hearts.

*Direct.*3. Have a care of your company, take heed of having any unnecessary familiarity with sinners. We cannot catch health from one another, but may soon catch a disease: the disease of sin is very catching, *Psal.*106.35. I would be as much afraid to come among wicked men, as I would be to come among them that have the plague. If we cannot make others better, let us have a care they do not make us worse. *Lot* was a miracle that kept fresh in *Sodoms* salt waters. Take heed of the occasions of sin; evil company they are an occasion to sin. Tis observable that the Nazerite in the old Law as he might drink no wine, so he was forbid to eat of the grape wherewith the wine was made, *Numb.*16. to teach us that evil company is the Devils draw-net by which he hath drawn millions to hell. How many in this City has been ruinated in soul and body by evil company, many go from a Playhouse to a whorehouse, and from a Tavern to Tyburn.

*Direct.*4. Have a care who you hear, tis our Saviours caution, *Matth.*7.15. *Beware of false Prophets.* Let me tell you the Devil hath his Ministers as well as Christ, we read in *Rev.* 12. 15. of a Serpent casting waters out of his mouth as a flood, that is, as the learned expound it, Satan by his Ministers and Emissaries cast out floods of *Arian* Doctrine to drown the Church. There are some of that subtilty and wit that have learned the art to mix error and truth together, and to give poyson in a golden cup: *Take*

heed

heed whom you hear, and how you hear. Be like those noble *Bereans*, *Act.* 17. that ſearcht the Scriptures, your ears muſt not be like Spunges that ſucks in the pudle water, with the pureſt Wine. But like the Fan that fans out the Chaff, whilſt the ſollid grain abideth; you muſt do like thoſe in *Mat.* 13. 48. they gathered the good fiſh into veſſels, and threw way the other. Saints are called Virgins for their wiſdom, they will not let every one defile their ſouls with errour; they have a judicious ear, and a critical pallate, they can diſtinguiſh between truth and errour, they can put a difference between meat of Gods ſending, and meat of the Devils cooking.

Direct. 5. *Study ſincerity*, Pſal. 51. 6. thou deſireſt truth in the inward parts; be what you ſeem to be; be not like the Waterman, that looks one way and Rows another; do not look Heaven-wards by a profeſſion, and Hell-wards by your converſation; do not pretend God, and love ſin; counterfeit piety is double iniquity: O let the heart be upright with God; the playner the Diamond is, the more richer; and the more plainer the heart is, the more doth God valule this Jewel. A little ruſty Gold, is far better then a great deal of bright Braſs, ſo a little true grace, though ruſted with many infirmities, is better then all the glitterings of hypocriſie, a ſincere heart is Gods Coyn, and heel give graynes of allowance.

Direct. 6. As you love your ſouls, be not ſtrangers

to your ſelves; be much and often in the work of ſelf examination, among all the books you read, turn over the book of your own heart; look into the book of Conſcience, and ſee what is written there, *Pſal. 77. 6. I commune with my own heart*, ſet up a judgement ſeat in your own ſouls, examine whether you have grace or no, prove whither you are in the faith; be as much affraid of painted holineſs, as you would be of going to a painted Heaven. Do not think your ſelves good, becauſe others think ſo; let the Word be the touch-ſtone by which you try your hearts; let the Word be the looking glaſs by which you judge the complexion. Of your ſouls for want of ſincerity many that have lived known to others, have dyed unknown to themſelves.

Direct. 7. Keep your ſpiritual watch, *Mark* 13. 37. *I ſay unto all watch*, If it were the laſt word I were to ſpeak, it ſhould be this, *Watch*, O what need have Chriſtians to be upon their watch, the heart is ſubtle, it will be ſtealing out unto vanity, and if we be not careful it will decoy us into ſin, we have a ſpecial eye on ſuch perſons as we do ſuſpect, thy heart is a very ſuſpicious peice, have thy eye ſtill upon it, watch it continually, for it is a boſome Traytor; *Job* ſet a watch before his eyes, *Job.* 31. 1. we muſt every day keep Sentinel, do not ſleep upon thy guard, our ſleeping time is Satans tempting time, therefore let not thy watch Candle go out.

Direct.

Direct. 8. Do you often who are the people of God aſſociate together, *Mal.* 3. 16. *Then they that feared the Lord ſpake often one to another.* Chriſts Doves ſhould flock together; one Chriſtian will help to heat another. One ſingle Coal of Juniper will ſoon dye, but many put together will keep them burning; conference ſometimes may do as much good as Preaching; one Chriſtian by good diſcourſe, drops the holy Oyl into another, and makes the lamp of grace to ſhine the brighter. It is great wiſdom to keep up the trade in a Corporation. Chriſtians by meeting often together and ſetting good diſcourſe on foot, keeps up the trade of godlineſs, which elſe will decay and ſoon be loſt. Is not the Communion of Saints an Article of our Creed? and yet do not many live as if this Article were blotted out. Naturaliſts have obſerved the ſumpathy of Plants, they ſay ſome Plants will grow better when they grow together, as the Vine and the Elme, the Olive and the mirtle; this is true in Religion, Saints who are trees of righteouſneſs, thrive beſt in godlineſs, when they grow together.

Direct. 9 Get your hearts ſcrewed above the World, *ſet your affections on things above*, *Col.* 3. 3. we may ſee the face of the moon in the Water, but the Moon is fixt above in the firmament; ſo though a Chriſtian walkes here below, yet his heart ſhould be fixed above in Heaven; there is our beſt kindred, our pureſt joy, our Manſion houſe

to have our hearts, above is the best and sweetest kind of life; the higher the Birde flyes, the sweeter it sings; and the higher the heart is raised above, the sweeter are its joys. The Eagle that flyes in the Ayr, is not stung with the Serpent. Those who have hearts elevated above this lower region of the World, they are not stung with the vexing vanities of the World, but are full of joy and contentment.

Direction 10. Trade much in promises, the promises are great supports to faith; faith lives on a promise, as the fish lives in the Water; promises are both comforting and quickning; they are the very breasts of the Gospel: As a childe by sucking at the breast gets strength, so faith by sucking at the brest of a promise will get strength as the Eagl. Promises are the bladders to keep us from sinking, when we come into the Waters of affliction: They are a sweet cluster of Grapes that grow upon Christ the true Vine; there is no condition we can be in, but there is a promise to it, the promises like manna sutes themselves to every Christians pallat.

Direct. 11. Live in a calling: *Jerom* gave this advice to his friend, that he should be always imployed, that when the Devil came he might not find him idle; sure I am, the same God that saith *remember the seventh day to keep it holy*, saith,

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ſix days ſhalt thou labour, the great God never ſealed any warrant to idleneſs; an Idle perſon is a ſhame to his profeſſion, 2 *Theſ.* 4. 11. *Some we hear work not at all. Solon* made a Law that Idleneſs ſhould be puniſhed, and *Cicero* ſaith of an Idle perſon, that he draweth his breath but doth not live, that is in a calling he is not uſeful, a good Chriſtian acts within the ſphear of a calling.

Direct. 12. Joyn the firſt and ſecond table together; piety towards God, and equity toward your Neighbour. The Apoſtle hath put theſe two together in one verſe, *Tit.* 2. 12. *that you ſhould live righteouſly and godlily*; righteouſly that relates to morality, godly that relates to piety and ſanctity. Always remember that every commandment hath the ſame divine ſtamp and authority as the other have. I would try a moral man by the duties of the firſt Table, and I would try a Profeſſor by the duties of the ſecond Table, ſome pretend faith, but they have no works; others have works but they have no faith: Some pretend zeal to God, but they are not juſt; others are juſt, but they have not one ſpark of zeal. I beſeech you, if you would go to Heaven, turn both ſides of the Table, the firſt and ſecond Table, joyn theſe two, piety and Morality. As we blame the Papiſts for blotting out the ſecond commandment, let not the Papiſts blame us for blotting out the ſecond Tables.

Direct.

Direct. 13. Joyn the Serpent and the Dove together, innocence and prudence, *Matth.* 10.16. *Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves*; we must have innocence with our wisdom, else our wisdom is but craftiness; and we must have wisdom with our innocency, else our innocency is but weakness; we must have the harmlesness of the dove, that we may not wrong others; and we must have the wisdom of the serpent that others may not abuse and circumvent us: Not to wrong the truth by silence, here is the innocency of the dove; not to betray our selves by rashness, here is the wisdom of the serpent; O how rare is it to have these two united, the Dove and the Serpent; the Dove without the Serpent is folly, and the Serpent without the Dove is impiety.

Direct. 14. Be more afraid of sin then of suffering; a man may suffer and yet have the love of God, but cannot sin but presently God is angry; sin eclipses the light of Gods face; in suffering, the conscience of a man may be quiet; as when the hail beats upon the tiles, there may be musick in the house; so when there is suffering upon the body, there may be that musick in the conscience; But when a man sins presumptuously he loses all his peace. *Spira* when he had abjured his Faith became a terrour to himself, he could not endure himself; he protested he thought *Cain* and *Judas* in Hell did not feel the terrour that he felt. He that will commit sin to prevent suffering, is like a man that lets his head be broke to save his helmet.

Direct. 15.

Direction 15. Take heed of Idolatry, 1 *John* 5. 21. Idolatry is an image of Jealouſie to provoke God; It breaks the Marriage knot aſunder, and makes the Lord diſclaim all intereſt in his people. The popiſh Religion is not defended by ſtrength of Argument, but by force of Armes. Keep your ſelves from Idols, and beware of ſuperſtition which is the Gentleman-Uſher to Popery.

Direction 16. Think not the worſe of Godlineſs becauſe it is reproached and perſecuted. Wicked men being ſtirred up by the Devil, do maliciouſly reproach the ways of God: Such were *Julian* and *Lucian*. And I obſerve, though men would be godly on their Death-beds, yet in the time of their living they revile and hate Godlineſs. But think not the worſe of Religion becauſe it is reproached by the wicked. Suppoſe a Virgin ſhould be reproached for her Chaſtity, is Chaſtity ever the worſe? If a blinde man ſhould jear the Sun, the Sun is never the leſs bright. Godlineſs is the Angels glory; and ſhall we be aſhamed of that which makes us like Angels? There is a time coming when the wicked would be glad to have ſome of that Holineſs which they now deſpiſe, but they ſhall then be as far from obtaining it, as they are now from deſiring it.

Direct. 17. Do not think the better of ſin becauſe you ſee it in faſhion; Think not the better of impiety becauſe moſt walk in this crooked way. The multi-

multitude is a fooliſh argument; I ſay it again, the multitude doth not argue the goodneſs of a thing. The Devils name is Legion, which ſignifies multitude. Hells road is at this day full of Travellers: Eſteem not better of ſin becauſe moſt go this way. The multitude is erronious ſaith *Jerom*: The pleading of the multitude will not hold at Gods Bar, when God ſhall ask you, Why did you prophane my Sabbaths? why were you drunk? why did you break your oaths? Lord, other men did ſo? God will ſay, ſeeing you have ſinned with the multitude, you ſhall go to Hell with the multitude. I beſeech you be tender of your ſouls, and walk *Antipedes* with the times; if you be living fiſh ſwim againſt the ſtream, *Epheſ.* 5. 11. *Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs.*

Direct. 18. In the buſineſs of Religion ſerve God with all your might, in *Eccleſiaſtes* 9. 10. *what ſoever thy hand finds to do, do it with all thy might; for there is no work in the grave whether thou art going.* This is the argument why we ſhould do all we can for God, and ſerve him with all our ſtrength, becauſe the grave is very neer, and there is no praying, no repenting in the grave; our time is but ſhort, therefore do as *David*, who danced before the Ark of God with all his might; act vigorouſly for God in your ſphears, you muſt not onely ſay a prayer, or read a prayer, but poure out your prayers before God, do not onely love God, but be ſick with love to God, in *Lev.* 6. 13. God would have

the

we coals put to the Incence, and why ſo? to ſignifie the heart ſhould be inflamed in affection to God, your prayers ſhould go up with the flame of devotion. I confeſs Hell may be taken without ſtorm, you may drop into Hell with eaſe, but it is all up Hill to Heaven; in the 11. of *Mat.* and the 12. *the violent take it by force*; heaven is not taken but by ſtorm. Do not we ſee the wicked active for the Devil, and their luſts; and ſhall they take more pains for hell, then you do for Heaven?

Direct. 19. Do all the good you can to others; God hath made every creature uſeful. The Sun has not its light for it ſelf but for us, the fountain runs free, & the Mirh drops from the Tree; every creature doth as it were deny it ſelf for us, the Beaſt gives its labour, the Bird gives us its Muſick, the ſilkworm gives us its ſilk; has God made every thing uſeful for us, and ſhall not we be uſeful to one another? O be helpful to the ſouls of others, and ſupply the wants of others. Jeſus Chriſt was a publique bleſſing in the World, *he went about doing good, Act.* 10.38. we are all Members of one body politick, nay are not we all members of one body myſtical, and ſhall not every Member be uſeful for the good of the body! that is a dead member that does not communicate to the body. Be uſeful, that when you dy there may be a miſs of you when you are gone; many live ſo unfruitful, that their life is ſcarce worth a prayer, or their death worth a tear.

Direct. 20. And ſo I have done; every day ſpend ſome thought upon eternity. O eternity, O eternity,

all of us here ere long, it may be some of us in a few days or hours, must lanch out into the Ocean of eternity. There is no prospective Glass, saith *Boetius*, by which we can see to the end of eternity; these sands can never be numbered, this line can never be measured; eternity it is a condition that is everlasting; you that are godly you shall be everlastingly happy, you shall always be sunning your selves in the light of Gods countenance, but the wicked shall be always suffering, ever lying under the scalding droping of the wrath of the Almighty; eternity to the godly, it is a day that hath no sun setting; eternity to the wicked, is a night that hath no sun rising. The serious thoughts of eternity would be a great means to promote holiness, the fore-thoughts of eternity would make us be very serious about our souls. O my soul thou art shortly to fly into eternity, a condition that never can be reversed or altered. How serious would this make us about the heaven-born soul, *Zeuxes* being asked why he was so long in drawing a Picture? Answered, I am now painting for eternity. How fervent would that man pray that thinks he is praying for eternity? how holy and circumspect would that man live that thinks upon this moment hangs eternity?

Secondly, the thoughts of eternity would make us slight and contemn all the things in the World, what is the world to him that has eternity always in his eye; did we think solemnly upon eternity, we should not over value the comforts of the World, nor over grieve at the crosses of the world. First I say we should not over value the comforts of the World; comforts they

they are ſweet, but they are ſwift and ſoon gone; the pleaſures of the World are but for a ſeaſon, juſt like *Noahs* Dove that brought an olive branch in her mouth, but had Wings preſently to flye away. Secondly, as not to over value, ſo not to over-grieve at the loſs of them; what are theſe ſufferings, they are but for a while, 1 *Phil.* 5. 10. and what is that to eternity? our ſuffering may be laſting, but they ſhall not be everlaſting; our greateſt afflictions are not worthy of that Eternal waight of glory.

And thus my Beloved I have given you twenty directions for your precious ſouls, I beſeech you treaſure them up as ſo many precious jewels in the Cabinet of your breaſts, carrying theſe about you may prove an excellent antidote againſt ſin, and to preſerve zeal, and keep it flaming on the Altar of your hearts. I have many things more to ſay to you, and I know not if God will give another oportunity; but I beſeech you let the things I have ſpoken abide upon you.

FINIS.